

Message Text

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, EEC

SUBJECT: US-EC CONSULTATIONS ON FOOD AID

REF: A. BRUSSELS 14868, B. BRUSSELS 15118, C. BRUSSELS

15248, D. BILLO-CAVANAUGH TELCON, AUG. 1, E.

77 BRUSSELS 15884, F. STATE 214436

1. MISSION NOTES THAT EC COMMISSION SUGGESTION, REF A, REGARDING DONOR CONSULTATIONS TO SEEK UNDERSTANDING ON MINIMUM UMR LEVELS FOR THE PRINCIPAL COMMODITIES SUPPLIED AS FOOD AID (REFS A, B, AND C), IS STILL PENDING. AS DISCUSSED REF D, MISSION WOULD WELCOME ANY BACKGROUND INFORMATION DEPARTMENT MIGHT SHARE WITH US ON USG RATIONALE FOR SETTING UMR'S. THIS WOULD ENABLE US TO BEGIN DIALOGUE WITH COMMISSION FOOD AID OFFICIALS ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. ON A RELATED MATTER, DURING A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH MISSION OFFICER, EC FOOD AID OFFICIALS RENEWED THEIR INTEREST (PARA 3, REF E) IN ARRANGING AN INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH DEPARTMENT AND AID/WASHINGTON OFFICIALS REGARDING OUTLOOK FOR FY-79 FOOD AID PROGRAMS (INCLUDING PL-480, TITLES I AND II) TO FACILITATE PLANNING ON BOTH SIDES.

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COMMISSION OFFICIALS SAY THEY ARE CONCERNED (DUE TO INCREASING MEMBER STATE SCRUTINY OF EC FOOD AID PROGRAMS) ABOUT DONORS AVOIDING DUPLICATION OF EFFORT VIS-A-VIS RECIPIENT COUNTRIES. GIVEN SCHEDULED TRANSMITTAL OF COMMISSION'S 1979 FOOD AID PROPOSALS (IN CEREALS, BUTTEROIL AND NFD) TO EC COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL IN MID-OCTOBER, COMMISSION OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF FOOD AID SAY DISCUSSIONS

WITH THEIR U.S. COUNTERPARTS IN LATE SEPTEMBER OR EARLY OCTOBER WOULD BE MOST BENEFICIAL, IF AN INFORMAL SESSION COULD BE ARRANGED AT THAT TIME.

3. GIVEN PROSPECTIVE VISIT OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR RAULLERSON TO EC HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS SEPT. 28-29 (REF F), WE WONDER WHETHER PARALLEL TALKS, OF THE TYPE MENTIONED IN PARA 2 ABOVE -- AND COVERING A RANGE OF BILATERAL FOOD AID AND DISASTER RELIEF TOPICS -- COULD BE ARRANGED BETWEEN MEMBERS OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR RAULLERSON'S STAFF WHO MAY BE ACCOMPANYING HIM ABROAD AND LORIMER MACKENZIE, GERARD MOLINIER AND KEITH ARROWSMITH OF THE COMMISSION. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT PERIODIC, INFORMAL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS HELD IN PREVIOUS YEARS BETWEEN FOOD AID OFFICIALS REPRESENTING CONCERNED WASHINGTON AGENCIES AND THEIR EC COUNTERPARTS HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN BOTH CLEARING UP MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND IMPROVING EFFICIENCY IN PROGRAMMING AND DISTRIBUTION OF COMMODITIES.

4. PLEASE ADVISE. HINTON

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